

**SENIOR NEWSLETTER      MAY 2021**  
**MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE AGING/ SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR**  
**EASTON SENIOR CENTER      ALISON WITHERBEE 203-268-1137**  
**[awitherbee@eastonct.gov](mailto:awitherbee@eastonct.gov)**  
**HOURS Monday through Friday 8:30 to 3:30**

Dear Friends,

Despite the fact that spring has sprung and we can get outside we still need to protect ourselves and others from Covid-19. I think it bears repeating that even people who've had their vaccines should continue taking basic prevention steps when recommended, so continue to wear a mask, socially distance and if you feel sick then call your doctor. The "fatigue" of this pandemic is a real thing, but we must try and stay vigilant, strong and safe! Now for some ideas of things you can do to feel not so isolated, take a drive the trees are in bloom and the grass is green, come to the senior center (they will be offering indoor and outdoor activities), and if you are fully vaccinated see your grandchildren or extended family if they are not too far away!

Be safe,

Many of you have called my office or the Senior Center looking for people who could plow their driveway, fix a step or paint a shed and I am in the process of updating our Home Maintenance list. The best people for carpentry, yardwork and plumbers come from you! If you have someone who has done a job for you and is honest, reliable and fair and can do small jobs, or even larger ones, please call me at 203-268-1137 so I can add them to my updated list.

Energy Assistance has been extended through May 20<sup>th</sup> so if you think you might qualify, or you have already applied then call my office to start an application or, check on the status of your account.

- Alliance For Community Empowerment (formerly ABCD, Inc.) (203) 366-8241
- Operation Fuel is a program that provides a one-time financial aid/cash grant of up to \$300 to help low income qualified households in an extreme emergency situation pay their heating and energy bills. Phone (203) 333-9033.
- Utility companies offer payment plans, free conservation measures, and shut off prevention to their customers.
- Non-profits, charities, and social service agencies may have limited cash assistance to help with paying electric and light bills.
- If someone is struggling to keep up with their energy costs, first you should always contact your utility company to find out about any programs they offer.

These solutions can help offset the costs of cooling and heating homes, and they will provide needed help with escalating electricity bills.

*The Commission for the Aging will meet on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the ESC at 5pm*

*Happy Mother's Day & Happy Memorial Day*

## **What Has Changed if you've been fully vaccinated?**

- You can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask.
- You can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together) without masks, unless any of those people or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- If you've been around someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay away from others or get tested unless you have symptoms.
- However, if you live in a group setting and are around someone who has COVID-19, you should still stay away from others for 14 days and get tested, even if you don't have symptoms.

## **What Hasn't Changed for now, if you've been fully vaccinated?**

- You should still take steps to protect yourself and others in many situations, like wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces. Take these precautions whenever you are in public.
- Gathering with unvaccinated people from more than one other household
- Visiting with an unvaccinated person who is at increased risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19 or who lives with a person at increased risk
- You should still avoid medium or large-sized gatherings.
- You should still delay domestic and international travel. If you do travel, you'll still need to follow CDC requirements and recommendations.
- You should still watch out for symptoms of COVID-19, especially if you've been around someone who is sick. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested and stay home and away from others.
- You will still need to follow guidance at your workplace.

## **What We Know and What We're Still Learning**

We know that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death.

We're still learning how effective the vaccines are against variants of the virus that causes COVID-19.

Early data show the vaccines may work against some variants but could be less effective against others.

We know that other prevention steps help stop the spread of COVID-19, and that these steps are still important, even as vaccines are being distributed.

We're still learning how well COVID-19 vaccines keep people from spreading the disease.

Early data show that the vaccines may help keep people from spreading COVID-19, but we are learning more as more people get vaccinated.

We're still learning how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people.

The CDC will continue to update our recommendations for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

**Until we know more about those questions, everyone — even people who've had their vaccines — should continue taking basic prevention steps when recommended.**